



2024

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Cumberland  
Valley Rail  
Trail**  
*Pennsylvania*



# Cumberland Valley Rail Trail

Pennsylvania

*The Cumberland Valley Rail Trail rolls 13.7 miles through a bucolic valley that's hemmed in by the Blue and South Mountains in south-*



The Cumberland Valley Rail Trail rolls 13.7 miles through a bucolic valley that's hemmed in by the Blue and South Mountains in south-central Pennsylvania. Running from Shippensburg to east of Newville, with a 1-mile segment in Carlisle, the trail will eventually extend seamlessly all the way to Carlisle, the county seat, for a distance of 20 miles. The pathway is part of the September 11th National Memorial Trail that connects the World Trade Center, Flight 93, and Pentagon Memorials.

The route roughly follows travel corridors first used by American Indians and then Scotch-Irish settlers in the mid-1700s. The trail traces the former Cumberland Valley Railroad, which launched service between Harrisburg and Chambersburg in 1837 and grew south all the way to Winchester, Virginia. The railroad became contentious

during the Civil War as it delivered Union troops and supplies into Southern territory; Confederates destroyed a section of tracks in Chambersburg, but the Union had the train running again in a week.

The last operator, Conrail, donated the railroad right-of-way to the Cumberland Valley Rails to Trails Council in 1995. The nonprofit finished nearly 10 miles of trail by 2006 and then set about acquiring the segment that extends to Carlisle in 2011. A 1-mile section in Carlisle, beginning at Allen Road, was completed in 2017, and 2018 saw an additional 2 miles open in Newville, with a goal of eventually connecting to Carlisle. The path is mostly crushed limestone, though sections in Shippensburg and Newville are asphalt, as are numerous road crossings along the way. The trail is open dawn–dusk, and bicyclists are required to wear helmets. Also, equestrians must keep to the grass alongside the trail, except at road crossings. If you start in Shippensburg, visit the railroad museum in an old boxcar at the trailhead. Or take advantage of several restaurants and diners located near Shippensburg University. For history buffs, a dozen Civil War and agricultural history signs are posted along the route. Shippensburg, settled in 1730, was the first community in the Cumberland Valley and was home to a fort during the French and Indian War. Three blocks from the trailhead in downtown, which was occupied by Confederate forces, Civil War historical markers are common. Leaving town, you'll pass the Shippensburg University campus and arrive at another trailhead at Shippensburg Township Community Park in 1 mile. The trail is wooded for the next 2 miles and then opens up for wide-ranging views of farms and pastureland on the way to Newville. You might see an Amish family with a horse and buggy as you cross roads along the way. Also, the trail council is known for employing goats to consume invasive weeds growing along the path. At 6.3 miles, you'll pass through Oakville, a stop on the Cumberland Valley Railroad and now a shady picnic spot. Another 3.8 miles of travel takes you to the Newville trailhead, after which you'll pass the borough of Newville on the south side. If you want a



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**States:** Pennsylvania

**Counties:** Cumberland

Length: 13.7miles

**Trail end points:** W Fort St & N Earl St (Shippensburg) to Green Hill Rd (Newville) to Allen Rd, just south of Cooper Circle to just south of Newville Rd (Carlisle)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt, Concrete, Crushed Stone

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Wheelchair

## Parking & Trail Access

To reach the Shippensburg trailhead from I-81 N, take Exit 24 and turn left onto PA 696/Olde Scotland Road. Go 2.1 miles, and turn left onto S. Fayette St. Then go 0.6 mile, and turn right onto Orange St. Go 0.2 mile, and turn left onto N. Earl St. Go 0.3 mile, and turn right onto W. Fort St. Look for parking immediately to your left, after passing the starting point for the trail.

To reach the Shippensburg trailhead from I-81 S, take Exit 29, and turn right onto PA 174/Walnut Bottom Road. Go 1.5 miles, and turn left onto US 11/E. King St. Go 0.8 mile, and turn right onto N. Earl St. Then go 0.3 mile, and turn right onto W. Fort St. Look for parking immediately to your left, after passing the starting point for the trail.

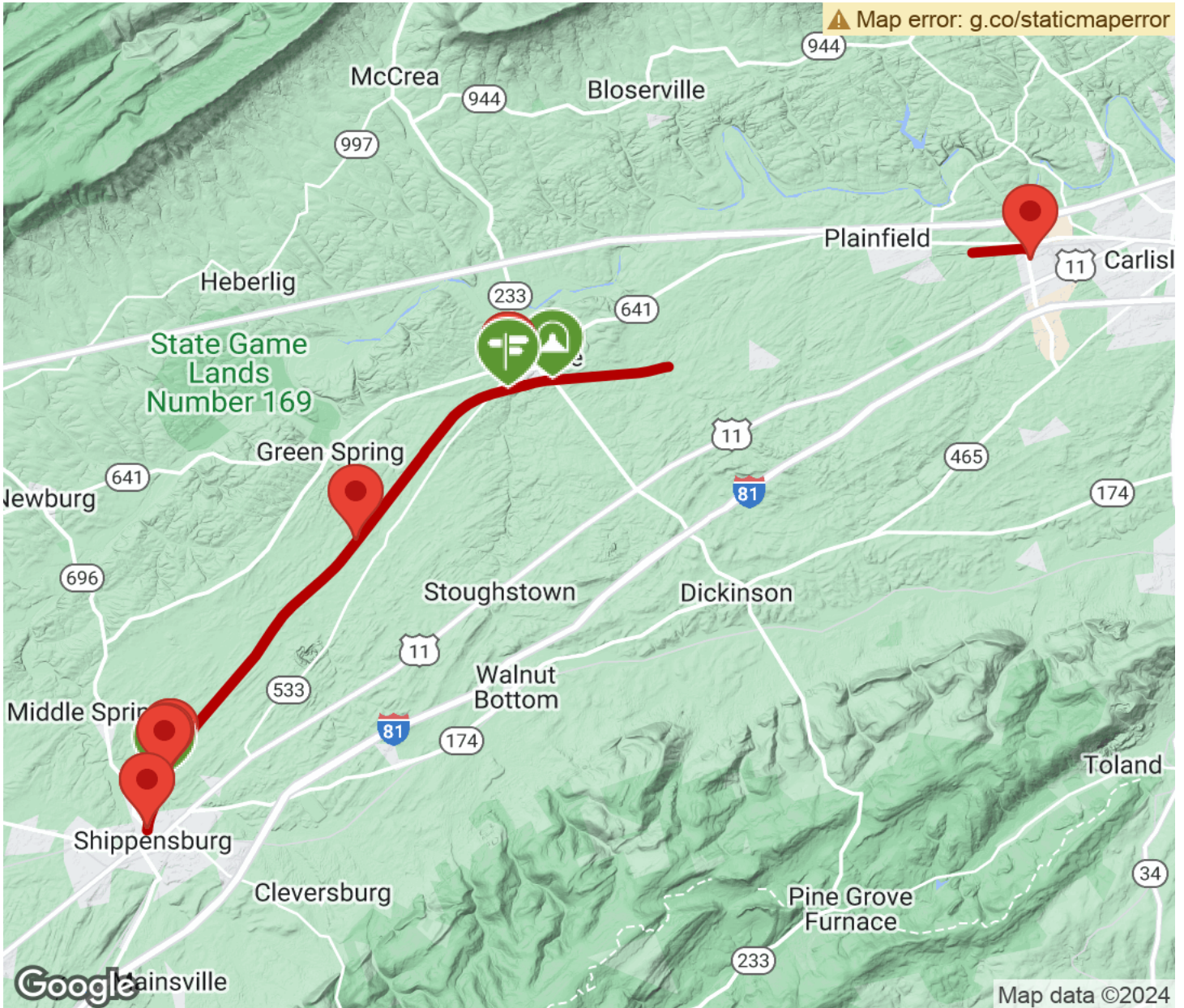
To reach the Newville trailhead from I-81, take Exit 37 onto PA 233. Head north, go 3.9 miles, and turn left onto Vine St. Go 0.2 mile, and continue straight to stay on PA 533/Fairfield St. 0.4 mile. Turn left onto Rich St., go 0.1 mile, and turn left onto McFarland St. The trailhead parking lot is immediately to your right.

To reach the Carlisle trailhead from I-81, take Exit 44, and head northwest on PA 465/Allen Road. Go 1.1 miles. Turn right into the parking lot, just after passing Ross Stores Distribution Center. To reach the trailhead, turn right out of the parking lot onto Allen Road, and go about 0.2 mile. Look for the trailhead on your left.



# Cumberland Valley Rail Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



**TrailLink**  
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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